

Message Text

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ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-07

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ROME FOR FODAG

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TAGS: EGEN, AORG,UN,EAID

SUBJECT: UN RESTRUCTURING COMMITTEE

REF: (A) USUN 841

(B) USUN 658

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(D) USUN 753

1. SUMMARY. THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON RESTRUCTURING OF THE UN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS HAS NOW AGREED TO A BROAD OUTLINE FOR APPROACHING ITS WORK. A SERIES OF WORKING GROUP SESSIONS BEGINNING APRIL 12 WILL REQUIRE US POSITIONS IN MORE SPECIFIC TERMS THAN HERETOFORE EVEN THOUGH THE OVER-ALL EXERCISE PROBABLY WILL MOVE SLOWLY. THE WESTERN (US
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AND EC-9) TACTIC OF TABLING PAPERS TO COUNTER MORE EXTREME

G-77 POSITIONS WORKED SUCCESSFULLY IN THE MEETING JUST CONCLUDED. THERE WERE SOME ROUGH SPOTS, HOWEVER, WHICH UNDERScore THE NEED FOR CLOSER WESTERN COORDINATION IN NEW YORK. CONTINUED US LEADERSHIP IS INDICATED SINCE RESTRUCTURING IS ONE OF OUR SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION INITIATIVES. AN ACTIVE US ROLE WILL, MOREOVER, SERVE OUR INTERESTS BOTH IN HIGHLIGHTING CONSTRUCTIVE IDEAS AND IN MAKING IT POSSIBLE TO BLOCK OR PREEMPT BAD IDEAS. DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN ON UNCTAD INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AT NAIROBI IN MAY ARE LIKELY TO HAVE MAJOR IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ENTIRE RESTRUCTURING EXERCISE. END SUMMARY.

2. THE AD HOC COMMITTEE SESSIION JUST ENDED CONSISTED OF TWO PARTS. MOST OF THE TIME WAS OCCUPIED BY A LENGTHY "GENERAL DEBATE" WHICH CONSISTED OF A SERIES OF STATEMENTS BY NATIONAL DELEGATIONS AND UN AGENCY HEADS. (SUMMARIES OF THESE STATEMENTS HAVE BEEN REPORTED BY TELEGRAM). THE LAST FEW DAYS OF THE SESSION WERE TAKN UP BY A CONTACT GROUP MEETING TO DRAFT DECISIONS ON GUIDELINES FOR INTER-SESSIONAL WORK (REFTEL A).

3. THE GENERAL DEBATE WAS, IN MANY RESPECTS, INCHOATE AS DELEGATIONS GROPED FOR IDEAS AND TRIED TO SOUND POSITIVE WHILE, IN FACT, KEEPING ALL OPTIONS OPEN. THE MAIN COMMON THREAD IN STATEMENTS BY AGENCY HEADS WAS, NATURALLY, THE NEED TO AVOID INTERFERING WITH THEIR AUTONOMY. IN SOME CASES, THERE WERE THINLY-DISGUISED ATTACKS ON COMPETING ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENTS IN THE UN SYSTEM. (THIS WAS ESPECIALLY NOTEWORTH IN COMMENTS BY SAOUMA OF FAO AND COREA OF UNCTAD).

4. DESPITE VARIOUS RESERVATIONS ON PARTICULAR ASPECTS, MANY SPEAKERS TOOK THE REPORT OF THE GROUP OF 25 EXPERTS AS A POINT OF DEPARTURE. MOST DELEGATIONS WERE, UNWILLING TO TAKE HARD POSITIONS ON SUCH KEY RECOMMENDATIONS AS ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW POST OF DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS, OR MERGING OF VARIOUS UN FUNDS. NEVERTHELESS, THERE WERE ENOUGH COMMENTS TO SHOW THAT THE EXPERTS' REPORT IS FINALLY RECEIVING SERIOUS ATTENTION. IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, ITS CONTENT WILL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UNDOUBTEDLY CONTINUE TO FIGURE IN DELIBERATIONS OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE AND THE WORKING GROUP.

5. THE G-77 MADE CLEAR--IN THE FIRST AD HOC COMMITTEE MEETING--THAT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES SEE RESTRUCTURING AS PART AND PARCEL OF CREATING THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER (NIEO), OF IMPLEMENTING THE CHARTER OF

ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF STATES (CERDS), AND SO ON. MOST AGENCY HEADS ALSO PERFORMED A RITUAL GENUFLECTION TOWARD THE NIEO.

6. THE US DELEGATION EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR A COOPERATIVE AND REALISTIC APPROACH; URGED THE SETTING ASIDE OF IDEOLOGICAL DISPUTES; BUT FIRMLY MAINTAINED US RESERVATIONS ON NIEO AND CERDS. WE ALSO ADVANCED SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS FOR ORGANIZING THE WORK. (SEE US STATEMENT IN REFTEL B).
7. THERE WERE NO SURPRISES IN POSITIONS TAKEN BY THE EC-9 OR OTHER WESTERN DELEGATIONS. THE SAME WAS TRUE FOR THE SOCIALIST GROUP. THEIR CONSERVATISM ON INSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS CAME THROUGH CLEARLY. THE CHAIRMAN (DADZIE OF GHANA) PRESIDED FAIRLY AND COMPETENTLY. HE RESPONDED WELL TO OUR INFORMAL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS.

8. IN THE CORRIDORS IT BECAME INCREASINGLY CLEAR THAT THE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION IS NOT REPEAT NOT WHETHER A MAJOR RESTRUCTURING WILL BE WORKED OUT THIS YEAR BUT, RATHER, WHETHER THE EXERCISE WILL BE ABLE TO GENERATE SERIOUS MOMENTUM AND LEAD TO ANY CONCRETE ACCOMPLISHMENTS. DESPITE DIFFERING MOTIVATIONS, DELEGATIONS ARE AWARE OF THE PRACTICAL AND POLICY INHIBITIONS ON A FORCED-DRAFT APPROACH TO RESTRUCTURING BETWEEN NOW AND THE NEXT GENERAL ASSEMBLY. (THIS INCLUDE SUCH FACTORS AS LACK OF TIME, PREOCCUPATION WITH THE CIEC AND, FOR WESTERN COUNTRIES, THE FACT OF THE MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS.) IN VIEW OF THIS CIRCUMSTANCE, WE SUGGESTED A TWO-TIER APPROACH IN THE HOPE THAT SOME MODEST BUT USEFUL RESULTS CAN BE ACHIEVED ON THE MANAGEMENT SIDE (E.G., PERSONNEL QUESTIONS) WHILE THE MAJOR POLICY ISSUES ARE APPROACHED IN A MORE DELIBERATE FASHION. WE MUST ANTICIPATE INITIAL DISCUSSION OF MORE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES, HOWEVER, AND BE READY FOR IT.

9. WHEN THE G-77, AT MEXICAN INSISTENCE, DECIDED TO PREPARE A PAPER AIMED AT POLITICIZING THE EXERCISE AT THE OUTSET BY RAISING SUCH SENSITIVE ISSUES AS TRADE POLICY, PERMANENT SOVEREIGNTY, AND RACISM, THE US AND THE EC-9 PUT THEIR OWN PAPERS ON THE TABLE IN THE CONTACT GROUP. (SEE REFTELS C AND D) THIS TACTIC WAS LARGELY SUCCESSFUL. IT WORKED IN PART BECAUSE MOST OF THE G-77 WERE NOT PREPARED TO BACK THE MEXICANS IN A CONFRONTATION OVER THE RESTRUCTURING EXERCISE NOW.

10. WE WERE, HOWEVER, PUT ON THE SPOT BY THE EC-9 AT ONE IMPORTANT STAGE OF THE CONTACT GROUP WORK. THEIR SPOKESMAN (THE BELGIAN DELEGATE) SUDDENLY TABLED A

"COMPROMISE" PROPOSAL WITHOUT INFORMING US. WHILE THE
EC-9 PAPER WAS GENERALLY ACCEPTABLE TO US--AND IN FACT
PROVIDED THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE FINAL AGREED DOCUMENT--
THE G-77 INEVITABLY TOOK IT AS A POINT OF DEPARTURE FOR FUR-

THE WESTERN CONCESSIONS WHICH THE US COULD NOT
ENTERTAIN. IN THE END, WE HAD TO MAKE A STRONG STATEMENT
FLATLY REFUSING TO GET INVOLVED IN AN EXERCISE THAT
RISKED REWRITING DELICATE SUBSTANTIVE LANGUAGE FROM THE
SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION RESOLUTION. THE US INTERVENTION
CLEARED THE AIR AND THE G-77 BACKED DOWN. THE NINE
AND THE USSR ACTUALLY TOOK THE LEAD IN BLOCKING
G-77 LANGUAGE THAT WOULD HAVE PREJUDICED CONSIDERATION
OF THE UNCTAD INSTITUTIONAL QUESTION AT NAIROBI.

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THE MEETING THUS ENDED SATISFACTORILY AND

IN A GOOD ATMOSPHERE. (WE PRIVATELY MADE OUR DISPLEASURE CLEAR TO THE NINE AND URGED BETTER COORDINATION IN THE FUTURE.)

11. THE INTERSESSIONAL GROUP IS TO MEET FROM APRIL 12 TO 23 WITH A POSSIBILITY OF SEVERAL ADDITIONAL SESSIONS PRIOR TO THE JUNE AD HOC COMMITTEE MEETING. IT WILL BE NECESSARY FOR THE US TO HAVE MORE SPECIFIC POSITIONS AND SUGGESTIONS THAN HERETOFORE. APART FROM THE FACT THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER'S SEPTEMBER 1 SPEECH STRONGLY BACKED THE RESTRUCTURING EXERCISE, US LEADERSHIP IS REQUIRED TO PROTECT OUR INTERESTS IN BOTH A POSITIVE AND A NEGATIVE SENSE--TO PUSH INITIATIVES THAT POINT TOWARD A MORE EFFICIENT AND RATIONAL UN SYSTEM AND TO FORESTALL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UNDERSIRABLE PROPOSALS FROM THE G-77 OR OTHERS.

12. WHILE WE SHALL HAVE TO CONTINUE TO FEEL OUR WAY AND MAINTAIN FLEXIBILITY, THERE IS A CONSTANT RISK THAT THE EXERCISE COULD FOUNDER WITH A SPILL-OVER EFFECT ON THE OVERALL NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE. IT COULD ALSO - WHETHER WE LIKE IT OR NOT-BE THE OCCASION FOR (A) UNPALATABLE PROPOSALS LINKING SUBSTANTIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS AND (B) ACRIMONIOUS DEBATE WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. THE RISKS WILL BE REDUCED TO THE EXTENT THAT THE US HAS CLEAR IDEAS ON SPECIFIC POINTS AND ON A GENERAL APPROACH IN TERMS OF A MODEL OR OVERALL SYSTEM. THE EXPERTS' REPORT REMAINS IMPORTANT IN THIS CONNECTION.

13. WE WOULD, HOWEVER, CAUTION AGAINST A SIMPLISTIC VIEW OF THE UN SYSTEM, E.G., A "STRONG ECOSOC" VERSUS A "WEAK ECOSOC". THE G-77 WILL REMAIN SOLIDLY BEHIND ATTEMPTS TO STRENGTHEN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND UNCTAD WHICH CONSTITUTIONALLY DERIVES ITS AUTHORITY FROM THE GA. EVEN A CONSIDERABLY-REINFORCED ECOSOC (INCLUDING REORDERING OF ITS SUB-BODIES AND GREATER WESTERN WILLINGNESS TO ADDRESS POLICY ISSUES). MAY NOT BE ENOUGH TO "TAME UNCTAD". INDEED, THE MANNER IN WHICH THE INSTITUTIONAL QUESTION IS HANDLED AT UNCTAD IV MAY WELL COLOR THE ENTIRE RESTRUCTURING EXERCISE. SHERER

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